



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott  
Eastern District of California

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## **FEDERAL INMATES INDICTED FOR THE MURDER OF FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICER**

FRESNO -- United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury returned a three count indictment charging JOSE CABRERA SABLAN, 43, of Guam, and JAMES NINETE LEON GUERRERO, 40, from Saipan, and now a resident of Guam, with first degree murder, first degree murder of a federal Correctional Officer and murder by a federal prisoner serving a life sentence.

This case is the product of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Duce Rice and Elana Landau, who are prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that on June 20, 2008, federal inmates JOSE CABRERA SABLAN and JAMES NINETE LEON GUERRERO attacked Correctional Officer Jose Rivera at the United States Penitentiary in Atwater, California. Officer Rivera was returning inmates to their cells when SABLAN pulled an 8" ice pick like shank out of his pocket and stabbed Officer Rivera in the upper torso. Officer Rivera attempted to escape but was tackled and held down by GUERRERO while SABLAN repeatedly stabbed Officer Rivera. Officer Rivera died as a result of his injuries.

"Federal correctional officers like Jose Rivera courageously put themselves in harm's way every day. Officer Rivera's death will not be in vain; these two murderers will be prosecuted to the fullest extent under federal law," stated United States Attorney Scott.

Bureau of Prisons Director Harley G. Lappin stated, "The Bureau of Prisons would like to thank and commend the United States Attorney's Office for their diligence in bringing this case forward. This is an important first step in what we hope will be a relatively short process of bringing some closure to this tragic event. We would also like to thank the FBI and our own Bureau of Prisons staff who were instrumental in the investigation of this murder."

The maximum statutory penalty for a violation of first degree murder is life imprisonment or death. The maximum statutory penalty for a violation of first or second degree murder by a federal prisoner serving a life sentence is life imprisonment or death.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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